190-. *Ellen G. White preaching at the 1901 General Conference Session.* Database on-line. Center for Adventist Research Image Database.

http://centerforadventistresearch.org/photos (accessed May 7, 2020).

The Principles and Process of Denominational Reorganization, 1901–1903

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The General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was formally organized at a meeting at Battle Creek, Michigan in May 1863.[1] At that time the membership was approximately 3500. The name "Seventh-day Adventist" had been chosen three years earlier.[2] In order to provide a structure for the emerging group of believers, it was decided that there would be three administrative levels of church organization: the local church, the conference, and the General Conference with headquarters in Battle Creek, Michigan. The officers of the General Conference were a president, secretary, and treasurer. Three persons were appointed as the members of a General Conference executive committee and General Conference sessions were to be held annually.[3]

A major reorganization of denominational structures occurred in the years 1901 and 1903 at the General Conference sessions that were held in those years.[4] While later adjustments have been made, the reorganization of 1901-1903 was the most significant period of major organizational reform in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The structures that were put in place at that time still form the organizational building blocks of the denomination.[5]

The Denominational Context of Reorganization (1901-1903)

Despite the simplicity and minimalism of the structures set up in 1863, the need for major modification of those structures became evident as the Church expanded during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. A number of contextual factors precipitated the need for change including institutional growth, coordination of mission between independently controlled entities, membership growth and diversity, centralized control, financial crisis, and difficulty supporting an expanding mission program.

The Growth of Institutions and Entities

The organization of 1863 did not anticipate the need to accommodate organizational entities to care for the publishing, educational, health, and missionary interests of the Church. Consequently, these organizations emerged not as integrated parts of the conference administrative structure of the Church, but stood as independent units apart from it. Although they had a separate infrastructure, most shared personnel with the administrative structure of the denomination. Most were located in Battle Creek.

By the beginning of 1888, the existing major auxiliary organizations were the General Tract and Missionary Society, established in 1874; the General Sabbath School Association, established in 1878; the Health and Temperance Association, established in 1879; and the General Conference Association, established in 1887. The National Religious Liberty Association was established in 1889, an autonomous Foreign Mission Board in the same year, and the Seventh-day Adventist Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association in 1893.[6]

Loss of Coordination and Integration

These auxiliary organizations were legally incorporated as independent bodies with their own officers and executive boards or committees. Although they were all part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—officers being appointed by, and reporting to the General Conference session—they were not administered directly by the General Conference. Because of their independent status, issues of coordination and integration were perennial problems during the 1890s. Not until the 1901 General Conference session and its reorganization of the administrative structures of the Church were the auxiliary organizations incorporated into the conference structure as departments of the General Conference.

Membership Growth and Diversity

Although Seventh-day Adventists still understood themselves to be simply "a body of believers associating together, taking the name of Seventh-day Adventists, and attaching their names to a covenant simply to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," with the Bible as "their only creed and discipline,"[7] by 1888 there were already thirty organized conferences containing 889 organized churches, 227 ordained ministers, and 182 licensed ministers. The constituency was supporting six publishing houses, three senior educational institutions, and two medical establishments.[8] By the turn of the century, the Church had 66,547 members spread not only across the United States, but also in Europe, Australia, and New Zealand, and other "mission fields." [9]

As the Church continued to grow and diversify, it was evident that the meager organizational framework that was set in place in 1863 could not cope with this numerical and geographical growth.

The Centralization of Control

The growing global missionary consciousness of the Church during the 1870s and 1880s was accompanied by increased centralization of administrative control. In 1885, George Butler, president of the General Conference from 1871-1874 and again from 1880-1888, spoke of the principles upon which the organization of the Church was established. He declared:

Supervision embraces all its [the General Conference] interests in every part of the world. There is not an institution among us, not a periodical issued, not a Conference or society, not a mission field connected with our work, that it has not a right to advise and counsel and investigate. It is the highest authority of an earthly character among Seventh-day Adventists.[10]

Butler's concept of administration grew out of his concept of leadership. After the General Conference of 1888, Ellen White, a founder and loyal supporter of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, wrote of Butler:

A sick man's mind has had a controlling power over the General Conference committee and the ministers have been the shadow and echo of Elder Butler about as long as it is healthy and for the good of the cause. Envy, evil surmisings, jealousies have been working like leaven until the whole lump seemed to be leavened...He thinks his position gives him such power that his voice is infallible.[11]

In response to some observations on the leadership style of James White and other church leaders he made at the time, Butler had written an essay in 1873 in which he encapsulated his attitude toward leadership.[12] His position was clear from the opening sentence: "There never was any great movement in this world without a leader; and in the nature of things it is impossible that there should be."[13]

Butler described a leader as a benevolent monarch. He supported his assertion by references to numerous biblical examples of authoritarian leaders. While he was willing to concede that Christ was indeed head of the church, he insisted that some men were "placed higher in authority in the church than others."[14]

Subsequently, the 1875 General Conference session passed a resolution that called for a revision of Butler's essay.[15] The 1877 session rescinded all parts of the essay that referred to the leadership of the Church as residing in one man. This was supported by a resolution which stated that:

The highest authority under God among Seventh-day Adventists is found in the will of the body of that people, as expressed in the decisions of the General Conference when acting within its proper jurisdiction; and that such decisions should be submitted to by all without exception, unless they can be shown to conflict with the word of God and the rights of individual conscience.[16]

Although James White soon came to disagree with Butler's position, and despite Ellen White's continuous appeals, Butler did not modify his leadership style very much until well after he was voted out of the presidency at the 1888 General Conference session.[17]

In the early 1880s, Ellen White began to rebuke General Conference administrators for taking too much of the responsibility for decision-making on themselves and failing to give others opportunity to have input. In a letter to W. C. and Mary White in 1883, Ellen White pointed out that "every one of our leading men" considered that "he was the very one who must bear all the responsibilities" and "failed to educate others to think" and "to act." In fact, she charged, the leading men gave the others "no chance."[18]

Implicit in her condemnation of those who followed that practice was reproof for those who permitted it to happen without seeking to correct the situation. Conference leaders, for instance, were told that they were to make their own decisions. The president of the General Conference could not possibly "understand the situation as well as you who are on the ground."[19]

As a corrective for centralization of control, Ellen White advocated proper use of the committee system that had been established when the General Conference was organized in 1863. She made it clear that, even in the

operation of institutions, one man's mind was not to control the decision-making process. She emphasized that "God would not have many minds the shadow of one man's mind," but that, as the Bible stated, "in a multitude of counselors there is safety."[20]

Financial Crisis

Another precipitating factor which led to restructuring was the state of the finances of the Church. When G. A. Irwin assumed the presidency of the General Conference in 1897, he faced a woeful financial predicament. Within a few weeks of his appointment, the situation was so desperate that he wrote that the General Conference was "living from hand to mouth, so to speak…Some days we get in two or three hundred dollars, and other days we have nothing." On the particular day that he was writing, he lamented that the treasury was "practically empty," even though there were at that time "a number of calls for means."[21]

Despite concerted effort by General Conference leaders, the situation did not improve substantially. While there were some periods when the predicament was not as desperate as it was at other times, at all times the situation was out of control. The financial statement for 1899 showed that at the beginning of that year the General Conference had only $55.33 cash on hand. The same report showed that by October 1 of the same year there was an operating deficit of $9,529.74.[22] At the beginning of 1901, the deficit was $41,589.11. In August, the deficit was still $39,600.[23]

Because of the chronic shortage of operating capital, nothing was being done to repay debts that had been incurred in order to establish various institutions. Percy Magan, who realized that part of the problem lay in the ease with which institutions borrowed money and the ease with which Church members lent it to them, charged that "all our institutions" had been in "the borrowing business." He advocated that it was time for them "to quit" borrowing. But not only were institutions to cease borrowing: Church members were to cease dabbling in "the lending business." Had the members not been "in the lending business," then it was certain that the institutions "would never have been in the borrowing business."[24]

There was an underlying reason as to why there was an ongoing financial crisis. The sense of imminence of the advent was so strong that the idea of church budgeting seemed to be in conflict with faith and conviction. The idea of framing a budget for the ensuring year of expense was not adopted until 1895, during O. A. Olsen's tenure as General Conference president, but it took some time to develop.

Decreasing Ability to Support Missionary Expansion

The inability of the denomination to financially support its growth began to limit the rate of its missionary expansion. During the last five years of the nineteenth century, there was a diminishing of missionary activity by the denomination, exacerbated by the lingering impact of the global financial recession of the mid-1890s. At the

1899 General Conference session, Allen Moon, president of the Foreign Mission Board, reported that:

During the last two years we have opened up no new work in any part of the world. It has been an impossibility. There have been demands for opening the work in China. That work ought to have been opened a year ago, yet we have been utterly unable to do anything toward opening it.[25]

The failure to commence any new work between 1897 and 1899, and the decrease in the number of missionaries being sent abroad between 1895 and 1900, does not appear to have been the result of any marked decrease in the Church's eschatological or missiological vision. A more likely explanation for the problems is that the centralized organization as it existed was unable to cope financially and administratively with its missionary enterprise.[26] A. G. Daniells, the longest serving General Conference president and the leader who presided over the 1901 and 1903 reorganizations, realized the limitations of the centralized organization of the Church as he visited Africa and Europe on his way from Australia to the 1901 General Conference session. In August 1900, while in Europe, he wrote to W. C. White that

My heart is filled with interest that I cannot express in behalf of these foreign fields, and I sincerely hope that the next session of the General Conference will rise to the high and important position it should take in behalf of these countries…I see much to encourage us, and some things that need careful management in the way of reorganization…In all these places I have secured all the details I can regarding the work, the same as I did in Africa, and shall arrange these data for future use if needed.[27]

Change was needed not only to accommodate the growth of the past but also to facilitate growth in the future.

Significant Steps Taken in the Process Toward Reorganization (1888-1903)

The changes that occurred during 1901-1903 had their antecedents in a number of significant decisions and events that occurred in the years before, particularly since 1888. Those events may be summarized as follows:

G. C. Session 1888	Organization of four "districts" in the United States and Canada designated South, East, West and Midwest.[28] These were not administrative units, but General Conference committee members were encouraged to offer counsel within their specified district.
GC Session 1889	Organization of six "districts" instead of four.[29] The districts at that time did not have constituencies. The district divisions were merely convenient units which could facilitate communication of General Conference decisions to the state conferences and monitor needs and problems which arose from time to time.
GC Session 1892	A. T. Robinson instrumental in the organization of the South African Conference, with auxiliary organizations under the control of the conference as "departments."[30]

GC Session 1893	Australasia voted as District 7 and Europe as District 8.[31]
January 1894	Organization of the Australasian Union Conference in Australia as District 7 of the General Conference.[32]
GC Session 1895	Role of the Districts in North America expanded so that they could relieve some of the burdens being borne by those in responsible positions at General Conference headquarters. It was resolved that the presidents of the conferences, chairmen of mission boards, and the district superintendent of each district "constitute an executive board" to "take under advisement, with power to act, such local matters as shall be named by the General Conference."[33]
GC Session 1897	Action taken "that Union Conferences be organized in Europe and America, as soon as deemed advisable, and that these Union Conferences hold biennial sessions, alternating with the General Conference."[34] However there is no record of any discussion of this plan and it does not appear that it was subsequently implemented in North America.[35] A further action was taken that "the General Conference territory be divided into three grand divisions." These divisions were to be 'the United States and British North America,' 'Europe,' and 'Australasia.' Each was to be known as a 'General Conference.' The remaining territory was to be supervised by the mission board.[36] Presidents were chosen for each of the three 'General Conferences.' Further, it was decided that the "presidency of the General Conference, the presidency of the Mission Board, and the presidency of the General Conference work in North America, be placed on three different men."[37] In actual fact, although a separate president was chosen for the Foreign Mission Board, one man--George Irwin—was chosen to be president of the General Conference and the newly created General Conference work in North America.[38]
July 1898	Organization of a European Union Conference[39]
GC Session 1899	A. T. Jones, E. J. Waggoner and W. W. Prescott raised the matter of reorganization, but little was accomplished.[40] Daniells lamented that the momentum toward reorganization had not continued at this session.[41]
April 1901	General Conference session, Battle Creek Michigan, April 2-23.
March/April 1903	General Conference session, Oakland, California, March 27-April 22.

The Organizational Changes that Resulted From the 1901 General Conference Session[42]

At the 1901 General Conference session held in Battle Creek, Michigan, major changes in the administrative structures of the Church were voted. The impetus for change continued at the 1903 General Conference session. Sound principles of organization were established at the denomination's founding in 1861-1863. But by 1901, it was recognized that those principles needed fresh application. Since 1888, some modifications to the

administrative structures had been attempted with some success in South Africa, Australia, and Europe. But change, which impacted on the whole of the denomination and its administrative structure, was needed.

Ellen White was particularly pointed in her endorsement of change. On the day before the official opening of the 1901 General Conference session, speaking in the library of Battle Creek College she declared, "God wants a change…right here…right now."[43] The following day when reiterating the concerns which she had communicated on the previous day, she added, "according to the light that has been given me–*and just how it is to be accomplished I cannot say*–greater strength must be brought into the managing force of the Conference."[44] She called for change and flexibility. She left it to the assembled delegates to determine just how that change would be accomplished and what organizational structures would be put in place.

Three principal changes that were made in 1901-1903 were. First, union conferences as the constituent bodies of the General Conference were formed.[45] Second, much of the decision-making power was moved from the General Conference administration to union conference executive committees. At the conclusion of the 1901, General Conference session Daniells said,

The Union Conference Committee will unite with each of the States in looking after their interests; work up, receive, and administer funds; advise with States in exchanging laborers; and practically carry forward the work in its territory as though no other Conference existed, except that it will cooperate with all other Union Conferences, and with the General Conference. This, it will plainly be seen, will distribute the responsibilities of the General Conference, placing them more fully and definitely upon those who are on the ground where the work is to be done and the issues to be met.[46]

And finally, the independent incorporated entities that had been operating departments and some institutions were dissolved and consolidated into departments of the General Conference. Again, to quote Daniells:

Some organizations have been discontinued, and their work has been made departmental of the General Conference. This is true of the International Sabbath-school Association, the Religious Liberty Association, and the International Tract Society. The Medical Missionary Board and the Foreign Mission Board have combined, and all the medical missions outside of America have been placed under the direction of the Mission Board. The Sentinel of Liberty has been transferred to the Pacific Press, and was removed to New York the first of November 1901. The Chicago office will be closed, and the workers drafted into other lines of work. The International Tract Society has been discontinued, the office closed, and the work transferred to the Mission Board. The office of the Mission Board has been transferred to Battle Creek. This gives the officers opportunity to counsel with the General Conference Committeemen, especially the medical members.[47]

The title of the chief officer of the General Conference was also changed to "Chairman of the Board" rather than "President." However, at the 1903 General Conference session the title "President" was reinstated.[48]

Mission as the Major Impetus for Reorganization

At the time of organization in 1863, a sense of global mission was not given the highest priority although it was among many reasons given for forming an organized church. Reflecting in 1907, A. G. Daniells listed only pragmatic reasons for organization in 1863. His list included failure to keep proper church membership records; paucity of church officers; no way of determining who were the accredited representatives of the people; no regular support for the ministry; and no legal provision for holding property.[49] Even Ellen White's list was pragmatically oriented, although she, unlike Daniells, did make mention of mission. Her reasons were to provide for the support of the ministry; for carrying the work in new fields; for protecting both the churches and the ministry from unworthy members; for the holding of church property; for the publication of truth through the press; and for many other objectives.[50]

But by the time of reorganization in 1901, mission was the preeminent reason for organization. Reorganization was undertaken in the first place not so much because Christ was coming, but because there was a "work" to do before the end could come.[51] Reorganization, or for that matter organization, could not be substantiated on the basis of the return of Christ alone. Those who insisted that organizational form be determined only by the imminence of the return of Christ had, in the history of Adventism, denied the necessity of any form of organization at all. It was the mission policy of the Church, which in 1905 was described as "the most important feature of our denominational policy," and the urgency associated with it that was the precipitating factor in reorganization more than the imminence of the Christ's return.[52]

Expectation of the return of Christ had always been a cardinal feature of the Seventh-day Adventist belief system. However, during the 1860s and 1870s, when the concept of world mission was developing, the accomplishment of the gospel commission came to be understood as a prerequisite to the return of Christ.[53] In practice, the accomplishment of that task rather than the second coming itself became the primary focus of attention for the Church.

That emphasis gained strength during the 1890s and into the twentieth century. In his opening address at the 1901 General Conference session, George Irwin, whose term as General Conference president was about to conclude, insisted that "the one great object" in all the deliberations and plans proposed for adoption was "the rapid dissemination of the third angel's message."[54] Daniells, who was to take over as General Conference president, proclaimed that "the message of the third angel is to be given to the entire world." It was not to be confined to a particular country, nation, or group of people, but was "for the whole world alike...The end [was] being delayed by his [God's] own people [and] the only way to hasten that end and bring it speedily [was] for his people to do their duty."[55]

The urgency of the situation had also been pointed out by Ellen White. For some time, she had been insisting that the end could already have come if the Church had done "her appointed work." In an editorial written only six months after the 1901 General Conference session, Uriah Smith collated a number of her references to the

duty of the Church with reference to the urgency of the situation. Typical of those which Smith selected was: "Had the Church of Christ done her appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would before this have been warned, and the Lord Jesus would have come to our earth in power and great glory." Smith concluded:

It is our own fault that we are not there [in the delights of the immortal state]. We are living on borrowed time, time borrowed from that during which we ought to have been in the kingdom. Let none sink down in discouragement with the thought that the Lord has delayed His work and His coming. It is not here now, only because we have not hastened it. It ought to make any one ashamed to be complaining that the Lord delays His coming, when he thinks that he ought to be in the kingdom here and now.[56]

While attending the European Union Conference session in 1902, Daniells said:

I sometimes hear people give an exhortation after this fashion: they say, "The Lord is soon coming; we have consequently a very short time in which to work, therefore we must be greatly in earnest." Now I think that is a wrong statement of the matter altogether. If I understand it, the fact is this: we ought to be terribly in earnest in this work, that the message may speedily be given to all the world, that Jesus may soon come. When we get the fact burned into our hearts that Jesus cannot come until the world is warned with the message for this time, then, dear friends, we shall be earnest that the Gospel may be given, that Jesus may come.[57]

None were more conscious of the part they were playing in the divine scheme of things than those who went to the ends of the earth to spread the gospel as missionaries. Writing just before he left to pioneer the Seventh-day Adventist cause in Australia, S. N. Haskell wrote that "the most conclusive evidence that we can have that we are nearing the close of probation and the coming of the Lord is the fact that the warning of this event is going to the whole world."[58]

The missionary nature of the Church was the theological perspective that informed the need for and shape of the structures of the Church. Writing to W. C. White in 1903, Daniells stated that "the vital object for which Seventh-day Adventists have been raised up is to prepare the world for the Coming Christ; the chief means for doing this work is the preaching of the present truth, or the third angel's message of Rev. 14:6-12."[59]

Because the need for organization arose from a perception of eschatological and missiological necessity, there was no doubt among those who held this view that the structure which they erected was biblically based. They understood that the New Testament affirmed that Christ was returning and that the transmission of the gospel to the world was the primary precondition for his return. With a consciousness of divine providence, they understood that Seventh-day Adventists had been specifically chosen within a precise time reference in order to herald the "everlasting gospel" to all the world. It was a conviction born of commitment to the necessity of a biblical foundation for their faith and practice, including their organizational practice. Daniells reflected the conviction of the denomination when, in 1906, he confidently declared that:

The doctrines we hold not only created our denomination, but our denominational aim, purpose, or *policy*, as well. *This denominational* purpose or *policy* is *formed by our view of what the Bible teaches*. It is peculiar to our denomination. It differs from the policies of other denominations and organizations as widely as our doctrinal views differ from theirs.[60] (Emphasis supplied.)

Some years later, W. A. Spicer, the General Conference president who succeeded Daniells, was even more emphatic than Daniells. Challenging the Church to take up the "world-wide proclamation of the everlasting gospel and the finishing of the work," he contended that "every principle in the organization of our work…is found in the Word of God." Clarence Crisler, who was the private secretary of Ellen White from 1901 until 1915 and a missionary in his own right, began the foreword to a pamphlet that he wrote the year before White's death by categorically stating that "the underlying principles of the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination…may be traced in the records of the New Testament." Both Spicer and Crisler were careful to say that it was "principles" and not forms that were to be found in the New Testament.[61]

To reiterate, reorganization was undertaken in the first place not because the end was coming, but because there was a "work" to do before the end could come. Reorganization, or for that matter organization, could not be substantiated on the basis of the return of Christ alone. It was the mission policy of the Church that in 1905 was described as "the most important feature of our denominational policy," and it was the urgency associated with that mission that was more the precipitating factor in reorganization than the imminence of the Christ's return.[62]

The Influence of Ellen G. White on Organization in the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Ellen White was committed to the need for sound principles of organization in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. She clearly understood that an efficient organization was necessary in order to facilitate the mission of the Church. She well knew that the Seventh-day Adventist Church had arisen and grown on the strength of a strong sense of divine providence—a sense of providence which prescribed that the three angel's messages and a worldwide missionary enterprise be the foci of attention for the fledgling organization. Organizational structures were needed that would facilitate rather than inhibit that vital sense of destiny and mission.

However, despite her profound sense of the need for thorough Church organization, and her support for basic fundamental principles that should guide the formulation of such an organizational form, at no time did Ellen White prescribe any specific form of organization that was to be definitive everywhere for all time. Ellen White simply did not tell the Church precisely how it was to organize itself. While she was an agent for change and understood the importance of sound principles of organization, she left the specifics to the wisdom of the assembled Church as it responded to the contingencies of the accomplishment of its God-given commission.[63]

Perhaps the closest White came to a discussion of the forms of organization was a short speech she gave early in the proceedings of the session. She said:

I am thankful that there is to be a time when the mists will be cleared away. I hope that this time has begun here. We want the mists here to be cleared away. I want to say that from the light given to me by God, there should have been years ago organizations such as are now proposed. When we first met in Conference, it was thought that the General Conference should extend over the whole world. But this is not in God's order. Conferences must be organized in different localities, and it will be for the health of the different Conferences to have it thus. This does not mean that we are to cut ourselves apart from one another and be as separate atoms. Every Conference is to touch every other Conference and be in harmony with every other Conference. God wants us to talk for this, and he wants us to act for this. We are the people of God, who are to be separate from the world. We are to stand as representatives of sacred truth.[64]

Not only did Ellen White refrain from prescribing specific structures of organization, but she also maintained an openness to flexibility and adaptation of those organizational forms in response to circumstances and contexts. Again, for her, the bottom line was always the facilitation of the mission of the Church. Structures which inhibited or detracted from task accomplishment, that led the Church to focus its time and attention inward rather than outward, were not at all appropriate.[65]

In no uncertain terms, Ellen White instructed the Church that changes were needed. Reference has been made to her speech on the day before the opening of the session in which she called for immediate change.[66] She called for both change and flexibility. That call was not accompanied by a statement that it was her intention to prescribe unchangeable structural forms.

Ellen White recognized the need for sound organization and described broad principles upon which an effective organization could be built. Her primary agenda, however, was the facilitation of the missionary commission of the Church. When structures ceased to facilitate and instead inhibited that primary focus, they were seen by her to be in need of change. At no time, however, did she attempt to dictate a specific form for those changes. She was committed to unity in diversity.

The Principles of Reorganization in 1901 and 1903

At the 1901 General Conference session, there were two opposing viewpoints with respect to the reasons for and the shape of reorganization. Alonzo T. Jones and his colleagues derived their principles of organization more from their individualistic understanding of soteriology and their ecclesiological emphasis.[67] Arthur G. Daniells and his colleagues derived their principles of organization more from their evaluation of the pragmatic situation of the Church with respect to the fulfilment of its missionary task.[68] Having just returned from extended periods of foreign missionary service, Daniells, W. A. Spicer, Ellen G. White, and William. C. White were keenly aware of

the inadequacy of the existing administrative structure to cope with the needs of the Church's global missionary enterprise. Their focus was on the reorganization of the administrative structures of the Church so that it could facilitate rather than inhibit mission.

The development of the missionary focus of the Church in the years after 1863 certainly did not diminish the need for structures. Daniells contended that the principles governing the choice of organizational structures should be those which supported the maintenance of the structures, not those which tended to destroy them. In retrospect, he pointed out that the principles which guided the Church in its reorganization could not be permitted to lead the Church towards disorganization or the abandonment of those "general principles" which in the 1860s had transformed a scattered group of "believers" into a viable denomination.[69]

Daniells would later list the advantages of reorganization and attempts would be made to systematize the theological rationale for reorganization.[70] However, despite repeated reference to "principles," again, no systematic treatment that could be used as a basis for decision making was forthcoming. Without a systematic ecclesiology, there was really no substantial basis upon which the Church could build its principles of organization.

Those principles which can be derived from extant records and which appear to have most strongly influenced reorganization and the formation of unions were decentralization, unity and diversity, participation and representation, decision by consensus, constituent authority, simplicity, and adaptability.

Decentralization

For Daniells and those aligned with him, decentralization as a principle of reorganization was paramount. In 1902, reflecting with the General Conference committee on what had been accomplished in 1901, Daniells affirmed that "the guiding principle [of reorganization] had been the decentralization of authority by the distribution of responsibility." He added that the application of that principle had led "to the organization of union conferences," and representation "on all operating committees" of the "four features of our work–the evangelical, medical, educational, and publishing interests."[71]

One of Daniells' favorite expressions was that those "on the ground" should bear the burden of administration and have the prerogative of decision making.[72] He saw the implementation of the union structure as the manner in which administrative responsibility was being delegated to those "on the ground." The union administrators were, for Daniells, those "on the ground."[73]

Daniells had borrowed the expression "on the ground" from Ellen White. In 1895 she had used the phrase in a testimony to ministers. She said:

Be sure that God has not laid upon those who remain away from these foreign fields of labor, the burden of criticizing the ones on the ground where the work is being done. Those who are not on the ground know

nothing about the necessities of the situation, and if they cannot say anything to help those who are on the ground, let them not hinder but show their wisdom by the eloquence of silence, and attend to the work that is close at hand…Let the Lord work with the men who are on the ground, and let those who are not on the ground walk humbly with God lest they get out of their place and lose their bearings.[74]

Under Daniells' leadership the commitment to the principle of decentralization was never revoked. Decentralization continued to be considered a vital principle governing the reorganization of the Church. However, the confrontation and polemics over organizational issues that began in mid-1902 and continued for the next seven years (until Jones was removed from Church membership in 1909), caused a renewal of emphasis on the need for unity in the Church. That desire for unity on the part of the administration of the Church meant that the structures of the Church increasingly became more an instrument of the centralization of authority than they did an instrument of delegation and decentralization of authority. Jones claimed that just such a tendency was built into the very structures themselves. Such was not necessarily the case, but circumstances and the disposition of the leaders themselves did indeed influence just what emphasis was evident in practice.

Perhaps more than any other, the issue of the presidency of the General Conference was indicative of the struggle to decentralize the decision-making functions of church organization. During the early part of the 1890s, Jones and Waggoner had been developing an ecclesiology which understood the headship of Christ to have preeminence over human leaders in the church–a christocentric ecclesiological model. At the same time, Ellen White was rebuking the leaders of the General Conference for their centralizing and authoritarian attitudes. By 1897, it was widely recognized that a change in the General Conference leadership was necessary. Jones and his associates, Waggoner and Prescott, saw the General Conference session in that year as an opportunity to impress upon the Church their concepts of organization, especially their view of the office of the president of the General Conference.[75]

A special series of testimonies was printed during the General Conference session of 1897 and circulated among the delegates. On page twenty-nine of that series was the sentence: "It is not wise to choose one man as president of the General Conference."[76] That sentence, taken out of its context, was to be used on many occasions in the coming years.[77]

The immediate outcome was that in 1897 the presidency of the General Conference Association, the presidency of the Foreign Mission Board and the presidency of the General Conference in North America were allocated to three different men rather than to only one man as had been the case previously. The territory of the General Conference was divided into three so that there were in actual fact three General Conferences (Australasia, Europe, and North America, with the latter retaining general oversight of the other two); and the jurisdiction of the president of the General Conference was distributed so that three presidents–in Australasia, Europe, and North America–bore the responsibility.[78] It appears that even the title "president" was dispensed with for a time,

although usage quickly reverted to the former label. For that reason, some took the opportunity to accuse the General Conference of apostasy.[79]

No significant adjustments to the scheme were made at the General Conference session in 1899. However, by 1901 Ellen White and W. C. White had returned to the United States and A. G. Daniells was emerging as the leader of the Church. All three had been involved with the formation of the Australasian Union Conference and, presumably, were amenable to innovation. Those who had been at the forefront of reform at the 1897 session considered that the time was right for them to champion a form of organization that fitted their theological requirement. Although Prescott was no longer quite as outspoken as he had been in 1897, it was he who brought the attention of the session to the same sentence that had precipitated the changes in 1897.[80]

Two changes with respect to the presidency were made at the 1901 session. First, it was voted that the leader of the General Conference be the "chairman" of the executive committee. Second, the chairman was to be elected by the executive committee itself rather than from the floor of the session. The intention was that no person carry the title of "president" of the General Conference. Unlike most of the other innovations in 1901, neither changing the title of the leader of the Church nor the method of election to office were part of the package that Daniells and the Whites had carried with them from Australia.

But within a few weeks, A. G. Daniells, who was appointed as chairman of the executive committee, was using the title "president." On May 21, he wrote to W. T. Knox that "some of the recommendations made during the Conference have turned out to be unwise, and we have been obliged to reverse the action of the Conference."[81] On May 31, he thought it necessary to explain the situation to W. C. White:

I have given considerable thought to the question you raise regarding the presidency of the General Conference. I may say further that the members of the Committee who were left at Battle Creek were brought face to face with the question, and we all decided that the meaning of the expression in the Testimony was not that the General Conference should have no president, but that the President of the General Conference should not be the one person to whom the details in the various parts of the field should be referred. Brother Prescott fully agreed with us in this. I was asked to write an explanation to the members of the Committee who were abroad; but I felt a little delicate about doing this. I told Brother Prescott I thought that the men who first gave this turn to the expression were the ones to correct it; and I still think so.[82]

Apparently, Daniells did not write to the members of the General Conference committee explaining what had happened. Five years later, A. T. Jones (a member of the executive committee elected at the General Conference session in 1901) charged that Daniells had manipulated an appointment to the General Conference presidency by a small group of committee members without the consent of the larger committee and against the intention and direction of the General Conference in session. Daniells replied that he had not been elected to the position at all. Jones countered that he must, therefore, have assumed the position and that to take such a step was even worse than if he had been elected.[83]

Daniells's reasoning regarding the use of a title can be traced in the correspondence between W. C. White and himself soon after the session in 1901. On May 24, 1901, White wrote to Daniells requesting his opinion on the matter of the title of president. He referred to Jones's contentions that the General Conference had "no president any more;" that the state conferences were "not to have presidents;" and that "the office of president of the Union Conference" was soon to be abolished. White explained that by insisting on the use of the term "chairman," he thought Jones was attacking the disposition towards kingly power that was often displayed by those in positions of responsibility. Nevertheless, he questioned the need to discard "the name and title of president" altogether. He thought that by using the designation "chairman," they had merely "exchanged a convenient title for a clumsy one." According to White's estimation, it was "the method of work more than the title that required reformation." If they were to revert to the use of "president," however, something should be written for the *Review and Herald* so that the situation would be understood by all.[84]

In reply, Daniells explained that the committee had decided "that the meaning of the expression in the Testimony was not that the General Conference should have no president, but that the president of the General Conference should not be the one person to whom the details in the various parts of the field should be referred." He added that he thought that "the men who first gave this turn to the expression were the ones to correct it."[85]

White replied that he thought it was right of Daniells to use the title "president" instead of the title "chairman of the General Conference committee." He was pleased, however, that there had been no public comments regarding the title. Nothing had actually been written in the *Review and Herald* regarding the matter. He also informed Daniells that A. T. Jones had been elected president of the California Conference, and that, surprisingly, it had been done "without any protest to the use of the title."[86]

In his reply to White, Daniells took the time to explain the situation more fully. First, he claimed that he had never been in harmony with what he considered "the radical positions" of Jones and Prescott. Second, he explained that the need to provide a title for the head of the organization in reference to some dealings with railway companies led Prescott and himself to re-examine the testimony written by Ellen White in 1896. Their conclusion was that "the man acting as president of the General Conference was not to be cumbered with the details of the entire conference." On that point the "division of the field into separate, distinct Union Conferences" satisfied the requirement. Third, they had concluded that the instruction given by Ellen White in the testimony which had been used to substantiate the abolition of the title of "president," was directed at the "putting away of kingly, autocratic, arbitrary power," not merely a title. Abuse of power, he reasoned, could be exercised regardless of the title used. With that, Daniells had informed Prescott that he was the man to make the explanation, and "thus the matter dropped."[87]

White, in his reply, simply noted "with interest" what Daniells had said concerning the title of president, but had no burden to say "anything more about it." He considered that no great harm would come from what had been

said unless somebody felt "a burden to create confusion.'[68]

Jones and his colleagues, however, did feel a burden. It was not "a burden to create confusion" for its own sake. It was a burden which had grown from their conviction that Christ alone was the head of the church. That theological position was to be translated into practice as a principle vital to their concept of organizational design.

At the 1903 General Conference session, a new constitution was passed which reinstated the title "president" and restored the election of the president as a prerogative of the delegates, rather than of the executive committee. This was not done without serious objections by Jones, Waggoner, and their allies, although the objections were not so much to the restoration of the method of election as they were to the reinstatement of the title. Even the committee which recommended the changes was divided on the issue. It submitted a majority report to the floor of the session which recommended that the changes be made; and a minority report which recommended that the constitution as written in 1901 be retained. In the discussion that followed, Percy Magan called the attempt to restore the former title of "president," "subversive to the principles of organization given...at the General Conferences of 1897 and 1901." His contention, along with those of Jones and Waggoner in particular, was that "those principles were given...by the Spirit of God.'[89] The implication was that they could not be changed.

Jones spoke against the dangers of a return to "one-man-power." For him, the use of the title seemed to be all that was needed to guarantee abuse of the position of leadership in the General Conference. He did not indicate that he recognized that leadership could be abused regardless of the specific title which was attached to its function. In the polemical situation in which he found himself, and with the efforts he was making to have the title of "president" permanently revoked, Jones may not have been willing to concede that point.[90]

After extended speeches by Daniells, W. C. White, J. N. Loughborough, and G. I. Butler, the new constitution was adopted. Daniells argued that the burden of the appeal by Ellen White was not that the title of "president" be dispensed with but that "the field...be divided up so that he [the president] will not have the large burden of details that have been falling upon him." This requirement, he claimed, was satisfied by the union conference arrangement.[91]

However, Jones, Waggoner, and many of their allies were not convinced. They believed that the Church was denying the principles that had been the basis of organization in 1901 and that it was opening the door to bureaucracy, following the same pattern of organization as the Roman Catholic Church. Later, when organizational polemics were strongest (in 1906 and 1907) it was the use of the title "president" that was decried by Jones as an indication that the church had denied New Testament principles in its choice of an organizational system.[92]

For Jones the title seemed to assume such proportions that it became the symbol of the success or failure of his quest for reform. He appears to have regarded the rejection of his proposal to use the title "chairman," as the

symbol of the rejection of all the principles of reorganization that he espoused. Ever since the General Conference session in 1897, Jones and Waggoner, by their insistence that the Church consider theological foundations for organizational structure, had had a marked influence on the direction that reorganization took. With the reinstatement of the title "president," Jones and Waggoner both recognized that the Church was moving in an entirely different direction from that which they had intended.

After the vote to reinstate the use of "president" at the General Conference session in 1903, despite his intention to uphold unity in the Church, Jones gradually became more outspoken. His attacks on the leadership of the Church were more often made in the public forum.

Unity and Diversity

When Daniells discussed the principles that were to govern the reorganization of the Church at the 1901 General Conference session and described the benefits that would accrue from the implementation of the union conference plan, he did not particularly mention unity. Certainly, Ellen White had done so in her address in the Battle Creek College library on the day before the commencement of the 1901 General Conference session,[93] and certainly the principle of unity had always been a top priority for Seventh-day Adventists and would continue to be so. But, for both Ellen White and A. G. Daniells the immediate priorities were elsewhere. In his single, most significant explanation of the operation of the Australasian Union Conference and its application to the world Church, Daniells discussed the simplification of machinery for transacting business, the need to place laborers [administrators] in the field in personal contact with the people, the advantage of having general boards in the field, the necessity of having a general organization that did not concern itself primarily with affairs in the United States, the General Conference as a "*world's* General Conference," and the necessity for the boards of institutions and the committees of union conferences to be composed of persons familiar with their geographical areas of administration.[94] He did not mention the need for unity.

However, at the second meeting of the General Conference session in 1903 Daniells did include unity among the list of advantages and benefits that were realized by reorganization. Having pointed out that reorganization had resulted in a distribution of responsibility, that "work in all parts of the world" was to be dealt with by those who were "on the ground," and that the "details" were to be "worked out" by them, he summarized: "in short, the plan recognizes one message, one body of people, and one general organization."[95]

By 1903, even though decentralization was still vital, it was now a form of a decentralization carried out only along "prescribed lines." The experiment that had seen the General Conference executive committee appointing its own chairman as an evidence of decentralization was, by 1903, perceived by many to be too vulnerable to political manipulation by a small number of people. In some respects, particularly in the organization of departments of the General Conference, there was more centralization than decentralization. Some were concerned that things were going back to what had occurred during the years leading up to reorganization.[96]

Ellen White sensed the danger of slipping backwards and placing inordinate stress on the oneness of the organization. Her concern was that such a position would result in the need to centralize authority, resulting in organizational uniformity. Specifically, with reference to the publishing concerns of the Church, she said:

No man's intelligence is to become such a controlling power that one man will have kingly authority in Battle Creek or in any other place. In no line of work is any one man to have power to turn the wheel. God forbids.[97]

She was particularly outspoken regarding failure to implement principles that had been introduced in 1901. Writing in January 1903, she maintained that as the delegates who had been in attendance at the session returned to their homes, they carried with them into "their work the wrong principles that had been prevailing in the work at Battle Creek."[98]

The context does not indicate exactly what "principles" were being discussed. Although, structural changes of which she approved had been made in 1901, the new structures could be abused with the same result as the former structures. Ellen White once again found it necessary to reprove the leaders of the Church and its departments because of the tendency to gather power to themselves. Whenever the need to promote unity was prioritized to the extent that it disrupted the maintenance of equilibrium between the principles of unity and diversity, and diversity was not taken into consideration as it should have been, centralization was the result.

Unity of action required administrative co-ordination that could best facilitate strategic initiatives on a global scale. But in 1901, the principle of diversity, rather than the principle of unity, was more determinative in establishing an additional level of administration, and in delegating some functions which had previously been performed by the General Conference to union conferences. The emphasis was on the need to recognize diversity by decentralization.

Participation and Representation

In 1901, Daniells had allowed the proposal that the executive committee elect its own chairman because he, along with W. C. White, considered the committee to be a "thoroughly representative one."[99] But, the committee selected in 1901 comprised representatives of departments and institutions, with only the union presidents as representatives of "the people" who were supposed to be the authority base in the Church. The union presidents were outnumbered seventeen to eight and could very easily be outvoted. Further, as chairmen or executive board members of the institutions within their own unions, union presidents were more often focused on institutional concerns than on the concerns of the local churches and the Church members. They were, therefore, more likely to be sympathetic to institutional problems and needs than to the needs and concerns of the Church at large. The composition of the committee inevitably led to a focus on institutional concerns. In this respect, Seventh-day Adventist mission methodology was in accord with that of most mission agencies which depended to a large degree on the establishment of institutions

International Representation

The situation with regard to representation of the world-wide constituency of the Church was even more troublesome. As the composition of the General Conference executive committee was being discussed in 1901, the question was asked as to whether there was any provision for the "different nationalities among us" being represented on the committee. W. W. Prescott answered by quoting Galatians 3:28 and assuring the delegates that such was not necessary because "ye are all one in Christ Jesus." The outcome was that the "safest course" was chosen–only North Americans were elected to the executive committee. But that is not to say that there was no commitment to the principle of representation. Representation was understood as being compatible with the higher principle of decentralization. The Church and its members were very much in the mind of Daniells, both at the General Conference session in 1901 and in the year that followed. Though he was conscious "more and more" of the "influence and power" that the General Conference had, he was anxious to use that power "rightly" and get into "sympathetic touch" with the "rank and file" of the Church constituency. He censured conference officers for failing to consult their constituencies when decisions of importance were to be made. In 1901, he had wanted administration and government in the Seventh-day Adventist Church to be "of the people, by the people, and for the people."[100]

Decision by Consensus

Along with his regard for the prerogatives of the members of the Church and his desire to implement a participatory decision-making process at local conference level, Daniells advocated decision making by consensus in 1901 and 1902, rather than by majority vote. In contrast to his concept of participation, which was promoted only on the state conference level, he advocated consensus decision making at every level of administration. Daniells told E. R. Palmer, his associate and confidante in Australia, that at the 1901 General Conference session no measure "received unkind treatment." Some of the proposals advanced were "amended" and a few "dropped out," but it had all been done by "common consent," not by "majority vote." Daniells declared that he had never seen "anything like it."[101]

It is not clear just what Daniells had in mind when he advocated the concept of consensus decision making. Whatever was the case, his attitude changed rapidly, as a consequence of the confrontation with John Harvey Kellogg, so that, by the General Conference session of 1903, vital decisions were being made on the strength of majority vote.[102]

The Church had some adjustments to make in the years immediately after 1901. Some of the plans that were made and the methods that were followed had to be changed. However, the shift from emphasis on participatory representation and consensus decision making to emphasis on more structured representation and majority-vote decision making after the clash with Kellogg and the extended polemics with those opposed

to the Church structure was indicative of a shift from emphasis on the need for diversity (or decentralization) to emphasis on preservation of unity.

Constituent Authority

In 1901, Daniells intended that the General Conference executive committee should be advisory, not executive. That is, it was not to make decisions as such, but to advise other bodies in their decision-making prerogative. Referring to the plan of organizing unions, Daniells hoped that the General Conference and the Mission Board (which had been integrated into the General Conference executive committee), would be "ultimately...quite free from perplexing details." He was convinced that the new plan of organization would enable the committees "to take the position of general advisory boards."[103] Two weeks later he wrote to the members of the General Conference Committee:

We are glad that the details in the various Union Conferences are being so fully taken over by those who are on the ground...Our hope is that we shall be left almost entirely free to study the large questions of policy affecting the entire field, and to devote our energies to fostering the work in the weak parts of the field, and also the great mission fields in the regions beyond. Thus the general machinery is being reduced to a few simple parts.[104]

Daniells wrote to Edith Graham, the treasurer of the Australasian Union, that the General Conference executive committee could not possibly be guilty of centralizing because the facts of the matter were that the authority to act was being placed in the hands of "those on the ground." Daniells stated that:

The General Conference Committee does not propose to deal directly with the affairs in any Union Conference. We propose to interest ourselves in the welfare of every Union Conference, in every line of work...So instead of centralizing our work, we have been distributing it."[105]

Daniells' answer to the centralization of power in the General Conference committee was that the committee was not going to make executive decisions. It was going to be a fostering, advisory, board whose interest was coordination, not supervision. With Ellen White's advice in mind, no doubt, Daniells was concerned that the General Conference committee should not exercise executive control, but that it should do everything in its power to co-ordinate the administrative functions of the Church so as to respect that authority resident in the church membership. With the reforms that were suggested and implemented and with the movement away from centralized authority, Daniells hailed the events of 1901 as the "beginning of a new era," the beginning of "our last grand march."[106]

In actual fact, Daniells was "feeling his way" somewhat. To a certain extent, there was need for a high degree of adaptation and flexibility as the principles were implemented in practice. For example, by 1903 Daniells was speaking as though he still held the "advisory" concept of the role of the General Conference executive

committee, although, he was not speaking with the same certainty. At the General Conference session he stated: "As the work is now shaping, the province of the General Conference committee is of an advisory character to a large extent–not altogether, by any means–and it is of a missionary character or phase."[107] No longer was the role of the General Conference executive committee merely advisory. A change of attitude had taken place. Changes in the role of the General Conference executive committee with respect to coordination as set over against control were being made with reference to the missionary focus of the committee and the church.

Simplicity

In view of the complication and confusion that had characterized denominational administration in the 1890s, reorganization was perceived as a simplification of the organizational system. In the 1890s, Ellen White had advocated simplicity in organization and insisted that the machinery was not to be "a galling yoke."[108] Therefore, when reorganization was being considered in 1901, simplicity was understood to be an essential principle. The principles of representation and distribution of authority were related to the principle of decentralization. So also was the principle of simplicity.[109]

Daniells expressed himself most succinctly on the need for simplicity at the European Union Conference session in 1902. He said: "Organization should be as simple as possible. The nearer we get to the end, the simpler will be the organization. I have no idea that we have got to the limit of simplicity."[110]

In 1903, simplicity was still described as a desirable principle of reorganization. In his "Chairman's Address," Daniells used the integration of the auxiliary organizations into General Conference departments as an example of the application of the principle of simplification.[111] However, it was admitted that in some regards, the machinery was still too complicated. Simplicity was proving to be an elusive quality in organization and it was to remain so. Especially was that to continue to be the case in those parts of the world where the administrative machinery that may have been necessary in North America or Europe was just "too complicated."[112]

Adaptability

The fact that the Church was willing to enter into a process of radical reorganization is indicative of the principle of adaptability in organizational structures. Furthermore, adaptations in 1903 indicate that the commitment to adaptability remained. In 1902, in addition to his remarks at the European Union Conference regarding simplicity, Daniells insisted:

We see many things differently from what we did ten years ago, and I expect that we shall see still more. As new light comes, we ought to advance with it, and not hold rigidly to old forms and old methods. Because a thing is done a certain way in one place is not reason why it should be done in the same way in another place, or even in

the same place at the same time.[113]

Apart from Ellen White, W. A. Spicer was probably the most vocal advocate of the importance of allowing adaptability in the form that organization took in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It was Spicer, an experienced missionary, who was responsible, as much as anyone, for the success of the missionary enterprise of the Church in the early years of the twentieth century. With his wide exposure to different cultures and situations, he repeatedly said:

The details of organization may vary according to conditions and work, but ever as God has called his church together there has appeared in it the spiritual gift of order and government, the spirit that rules in heaven.[114]

Conclusion

The global mission and ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church continues to be facilitated by the structures implemented in 1901 and 1903. From time to time, modifications have been made, such as the creation of the divisions of the General Conference. However, divisions were not created as an additional level of church organization. They were created without constituencies as parts of the General Conference operating in designated geopolitical areas. The 4-tiered constituent structure–local church, local conference, union conference, General Conference–that was implemented in 1901 remains. Departments which serve the Church at each tier of the structure remain. Time will tell if further major revision is necessary.

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White, Ellen G. Ellen G. White to John Harvey Kellogg. April 26, 1886. Letter 7, 1886. Ellen G. White Estate Office.

White, Ellen G. Ellen G. White to Mary White. November 4, 1888. Letter 82, 1888. Ellen G. White Estate Office.

White, Ellen G. Ellen G. White to the Brethren at the General Conference. December 19, 1892. Letter 127, 1892. Ellen G. White Estate Office.

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White, Ellen G. Ellen G. White to J. Edson White. June 30, 1901. Letter 62, 1901 Ellen G. White Estate Office.

White, Ellen G. Ellen G. White to Judge Jesse Arthur. January 14, 1903. Letter 17, 1903. Ellen G. White Estate Office.

White, Ellen G. Ellen G. White to A. O. Tait. August 27, 1896. Letter 100, 1896. Ellen White Estate Office.

White, Ellen G. Ellen G. White to W. C. White and Mary White. August 23, 1883. Letter 23, 1883 Ellen G. White Estate Office.

White, W. C. W. C. White to Percy T. Magan. March 8, 1900. Letter Book 15. Ellen G. White Estate Office.

NOTES

1. John Byington and Uriah Smith, "Report of General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists," *ARH*, May 26, 1863, 204; See Denominational Organization.

2. Joseph Bates and Uriah Smith, "Business Proceedings of the B[attle] C[reek] Conference," *ARH*, October 23, 1860, 179.

3. For a detailed discussion of the factors which precipitated denominational organization in 1863, see Andrew G. Mustard, *James White and SDA Organization: Historical Development, 1844-1881* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1987).

4. The minutes of those General Conference sessions may be accessed at the General Conference Archives webpage at http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Minutes; also see the *General Conference Bulletin* for 1901 and 1903.

5. Much of the content in this article is directly drawn from research conducted by the author when preparing and writing a PhD dissertation at Andrews University in 1989, and from the published version of the dissertation. See Barry David Oliver, *SDA Organizational Structure: Past, Present, and Future,* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1989).

6. For a summary overview of the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the beginning of 1888, see *A Brief Sketch of the Origin, Progress and Principles of the Seventh-day Adventists* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1888), 9-40.

7. Ibid., 11-12.

8. Ibid., 9-40.

9. *Annual Statistical Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, December 31, 1900,"* accessed March 4, 2018, http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Statistics/ASR/ASR1900.pdf ; *A Brief Sketch of the Origin, Progress and Principles of the Seventh-day Adventists* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1888), 9, 11-12.

10. *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1889), 50.

11. Ellen G. White to Mary White, Letter 82, November 4, 1888, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

12. See Kevin M. Burton, "Centralized for Protection: George I. Butler and His Philosophy of One-Person Leadership," (MA Thesis, Andrews University, 2015).

13. George I. Butler, "Leadership," *ARH*, November 18, 1873, 180.

14. Ibid., 180-81.

15. "General Conference Report," *ARH*, August 26, 1875, 59.

16. "General Conference Report," *ARH*, October 4, 1877, 106.

17. For a discussion of the conflict between James White and George Butler over the concept of leadership, see Mustard, *James White and SDA Organization*, 175-78; and Bert Haloviak, "SDAs and Organization, 1844-1907" (paper presented at the Central California Camp meeting, August 1987), General Conference Archives, Folder 412, Box 402-427, 39-41.

18. Ellen G. White to W. C. White and Mary White, Letter 23, August 23, 1883, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

19. These words were spoken to the delegates assembled at the General Conference session in 1883. Ellen G. White, "Genuine Faith and Holiness," Manuscript 3, 1883, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

20. Ellen G. White to John Harvey Kellogg, Letter 7, April 26, 1886, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

21. G. A. Irwin to N. W. Allee, May 5, 1897, Record Group 11, Letter Book 18, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

22. General Conference Committee Minutes, October 10, 1899, Record Group 1, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

23. A. G. Daniells to Members of the General Conference Committee, August 2, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 24, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland. See also A. G. Daniells to J. E. Jayne, August 3, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 24, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

24. Percy T. Magan, "Denominational Debts," *ARH*, April 11, 1899, 235-36.

25. *General Conference Bulletin*, 1899, 73.

26. The missionary program was being stifled because decisions which should have been made by "those on the ground" had to be referred to Battle Creek. See W. A. Spicer to A. G. Daniells, October 5, 1893, Record Group 9, A. G. Daniells Folder 2, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland; A. G. Daniells to E. H. Gates, May 23, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 23, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

27. A. G. Daniells to W. C. White, August 23, 1900, Incoming Files, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

28. See Oliver, *SDA Organizational Structure*, 69-70.

29. *General Conference Bulletin, 1889*, 152-153.

30. See Oliver, *SDA Organizational Structure*, 73-81

31. See Oliver, *SDA Organizational Structure*, 100-104.

32. *Seventh-day Adventist Online Yearbook*, "Australasian Union Conference," accessed December 4, 2019, http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB1894.pdf

33. *General Conference Bulletin*, 1895, 514; See Oliver, *SDA Organizational Structure*, 106 – 109.

34. *General Conference Bulletin*, 1897, 215. When at the 1901 session the delegates representing the Southern field presented the first memorial requesting that a district be organized into a union conference, they referred to this proposal that had been adopted at the 1897 session. See *General Conference Bulletin*, 1901, 67.

35. See Oliver, *SDA Organizational Structure*, 140.

36. *General Conference Bulletin*, 1897, 215.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. See L. R Conradi, "Development of a General Organization in Europe," 1920, Record Group 21, Folder: "L.R. Conradi," General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

40. "Reformation Called For," *ARH*, April 4, 1899, 217.

41. A. G. Daniells to Edith Graham, May 24, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 23, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

42. A comprehensive directory of organizations, institutions, and employees of the global Church as they were subsequent to the reorganization of 1901 can be consulted in *General Conference Bulletin, 1901*, 520-559.

43. "Talk of Mrs. E. G. White, before Representative Brethren, In the College Library, April 1, 1901, 2:30 P.M.," MS 43a, 1901 (emphasis supplied). This manuscript together with MS 43, an edited edition of Ellen White's speech is available in the Ellen G. White Estate Office.

44. *General Conference Bulletin* 1901, 25 (emphasis supplied).

45. A. G. Daniells, "A Brief Glance at the Work of Reorganization," *General Conference Bulletin Published Quarterly*, Third Quarter 1901, 513-515.

46. Ibid, 513 -514.

47. Ibid, 515.

48. For an extended discussion of the issue of the presidency of the General Conference utilising primary resources see Oliver, *SDA Organizational Structure*, 184-201.

49. A. G. Daniells, "Organization: A Brief Account of Its History in the Development of the Cause of the Third Angel's Message," *ARH*, February 14, 1907, 5.

50. Ellen G. White to the Brethren at the General Conference, December 19, 1892, Letter 127, 1892, Ellen G. White Estate office.

51. In 1906, when refuting charges made by A. T. Jones, it had been affirmed that reorganization "was to be effected which would more fully take in the full scope of the work to be accomplished throughout the world" (General Conference Committee, *A Statement Refuting Charges Made by A. T. Jones Against the Spirit of Prophecy and the Plan of Organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination*" (Washington DC: General Conference Committee, 1906), 16. The statement can be found at http://ellenwhite.org/content/file/statement-refuting-charges-made-t-jones-against-spirit-prophecy-and-plan-organization#document.

52. A. G. Daniells, "The President's Address: A Review and an Outlook–Suggestions for Conference Action," *ARH*, May 11, 1905, 8.

53. See Borge Schantz, "The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Missionary Thought: Contemporary Appraisal," (PhD diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1983).

54. *General Conference Bulletin,* 1901, 20, 47.

55. "Original Reports and Stenographically Reported Discussions Thereof Had at the Thirty-Fourth Biennial Session of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference, April 19, 1901," Record Group 0, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland, 40a, 51.

56. [Uriah Smith], "Living on Borrowed Time," *ARH,* October 1, 1901, 636.

57. "Sermon by A. G. Daniells at the Opening of the Conference," *Bulletin of the European Union Conference Held in London, May 15-25, 1902,* 3.

58. S. N. Haskell, "Australia," *ARH,* January 6, 1885, 12.

59. A. G. Daniells to W. C. White, May 17, 1903, Incoming Files, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

60. A. G. Daniells, "A Statement Concerning Our Present Situation–No. 3," *ARH,* February 22, 1906, 6.

61. W. A. Spicer, "Divine Warnings against Disorganization," *ARH,* September 14, 1916, 4; C. C. Crisler, *The Value of Organization*: *An Historical Study* , (n.p. n.d.), 3. See also S. N. Haskell, "Organization–No. 18," *ARH* May 16, 1907, 4; A. G. Daniells, "Organization as Developed by Our Pioneers," *ARH,* February 21, 1918, 5; and J. L. McElhany, "Principles of Conference Administration," *Ministry,* March 1938, 5.

62. A. G. Daniells, "The President's Address: A Review and an Outlook–Suggestions for Conference Action," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald,* May 11, 1905, 8.

63. See, for example, Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to the Church Regarding Individual Responsibility and Christian Unity* (Mountain View, CA: The California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1907), 19-20.

64. "General Conference Proceedings, Third Meeting, Thursday April 4, 3.00 p.m." *General Conference Bulletin,* April 5, 1901, 68-69.

65. For example, soon after the General Conference session of 1901, Ellen White wrote to A. G. Daniells, the newly elected president of the General Conference regarding the work among the "colored people" in the South. She admonished Daniells to be flexible in his administration because of the unique needs of the South. The church was not to become "narrow" and confined by "regular lines." Different methods of organization and approach were necessary in culturally diverse situations. For administration to be tied to an inflexible predetermined policy which could not adapt to diverse cultural and sociological needs was, for Ellen White, an abuse of administrative prerogative, (see Ellen G. White to A. G. Daniells, Letter 65, June 30, 1901, Ellen G. White Estate Office.) The very same day, Ellen White wrote to her son Edson, who was working in the southern part of the United States. Edson was inclined to be too adventurous in his innovations. Whereas Daniells, the administrator, had to be counseled to allow change and innovation in a different socio-cultural milieu, Edson had to be cautioned not to be too hasty. Ellen White wrote: "You need now to be able to think and judge with clear discrimination. Great care must be exercised in making changes which differ from the old-established routine. Changes are to be made, but they are not to be made in such an abrupt manner that you will not carry the people with you. You who are working in the South must labor as if in a foreign country. You must work as pioneers,

seeking to save expense in every way possible. And above all, you must study to show yourselves approved unto God" (Ellen G. White to J. Edson White, Letter 62, 1901, June 30, 1901. Ellen G. White Estate Office).

66. *General Conference Bulletin*, 1901, 25 (emphasis supplied).

67. See Oliver, *SDA Organizational Structure*, 221-240.

68. Ibid., 240-271.

69. A. G. Daniells, "A Statement of Facts Concerning Our Present Situation–No. 9," *ARH*, April 5, 1906, 6.

70. At the 1903 General Conference session Daniells made reference to some of the "features" of the "work" which were the result of reorganization. See A. G. Daniells, "Some Beneficial Features of Our Organization," *ARH*, March 14, 1918, 6.

71. General Conference Committee Minutes, November 13, 1902, 2:30 P.M., Record Group 1, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

72. Ellen G. White to A. O. Tait, August 27, 1896, Letter 100, 1896, Ellen White Estate; A. G. Daniells to W. T. Knox, May 21, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 23, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland; A. G. Daniells to E. H. Gates, May 23, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 23, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland; A. G. Daniells to Edith R. Graham, May 24, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 23, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland; A. G. Daniells to W. C. White, June 19, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 23, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland; A. G. Daniells to Members of the General Conference Committee, August 2, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 24, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

73. A. G. Daniells to H. W. Cottrell, June 17, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 23, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

74. Ellen G. White, *Special Instruction to Ministers and Workers* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1895), 33.

75. The record of the General Conference session proceedings for 1897 is exceedingly brief. The only explicit references to organizational concepts and principles can be found in the record of a series of sermons that were preached by E. J. Waggoner on the book of Hebrews. *GC Bulletin*, 1897, 156-7, 235-36, 250-52.

76. Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies for Ministers and Workers* (College View, NE: College Press, 1897), 29. Also reprinted in Ellen G. White, *Series A* (Payson, AZ: Leaves of Autumn Books, 1976), 287. The letter, "To Conference Presidents and Councillors," in which the sentence was penned, was written from "Sunnyside," Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia, in August 1896.

77. No specific entry was made in the *GC Bulletin*, with reference to Ellen White's statement concerning the presidency of the General Conference, except in a preamble to the recommendations presented to the floor of the session by the sub-committee on plans *GC Bulletin* 1897, 212.

78. George C. Tenney, "Doings of the Conference," *ARH*, March 16, 1897, 170. At the 1903 General Conference session, Jones attempted to call the delegates back to the principles of 1897 when "the Conference adopted . . . three presidents instead of one" (Sten 1903, 9 April 1903, RG 0, GCAr, 44).

79. Writing to A. G. Daniells soon after the 1901 General Conference session, W. C. White remembered that "after the Conference at College View [1897] it was emphatically stated that now we had no president of the General Conference; and yet within a few months the title was used the same as before; and this very fact is now pointed to as a matter of apostasy" (W. C. White to A. G. Daniells, May 24, 1901, Letter 16, Ellen G. White Estate Office).

80. "Original Reports and Stenographically Reported Discussions Thereof Had at the Thirty-Fourth Biennial Session of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference, April 10, 1901," Record Group 0, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland, 59.

81. A. G. Daniells to W. T. Knox, May 21, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 23, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland. In 1906 W. C. White noted that a search of his personal letter files revealed that "letterheads published for the Mission Board shortly after the close of the conference of 1901, bear the name of A. G. Daniells, Chairman, whereas the letter-heads published for the General Conference Committee which were issued as early as May 13, bear the name A. G. Daniells, President" (W. C. White to A. G. Daniells, August 13, 1906, Record Group 11, W. C. White Folder 2, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring Maryland). The *General Conference Quarterly Bulletin* for the second quarter of 1901 listed Daniells as the chairman of the committee. The Bulletin for the third quarter listed him as the president.

82. A. G. Daniells to W. C. White, May 31, 1901, Incoming Files, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

83. A. T. Jones to A. G. Daniells, January 26, 1906, Record Group 11, 1910 [*sic*] A. T. Jones Folder, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland; General Conference Committee, *A Statement Refuting Charges Made by A. T. Jones against the Spirit of Prophecy and the Plan of Organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination.*" (Washington DC: General Conference Committee, 1906), 40, accessed March 2, 2018, http://ellenwhite.org/content/file/statement-refuting-charges-made-t-jones-against-spirit-prophecy-and-plan-organization#document; A. T. Jones, *A Final Word and a Confession* (n.p., [1906]),31-35.

84. W. C. White to A. G. Daniells, May 24, 1901, Letter Book 16, Ellen G, White Estate Office.

85. A. G. Daniells to W. C. White, May 31, 1901, Incoming Files, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

86. W. C. White to A. G. Daniells, June 19, 1901, LB 16, Ellen G. White Estate Office. For an account of Jones tenure as conference president, see Knight, *From 1888 to Apostasy: The Case of A. T. Jones* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1985), 194-205.

87. A. G. Daniells to W. C. White, July 1, 1901, Incoming Files, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

88. W. C. White to A. G. Daniells, July 11, 1901, Record Group 9, A. G. Daniells Folder 3, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

89. "Original Reports and Stenographically Reported Discussions Thereof Had at the Thirty-Fifth Biennial Session of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference, April 9, 1903," Record Group 0, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland, 39-43.

90. Jones's complete argument and the replies given by W. C. White, A. G. Daniells, J. N. Loughborough, and G. I. Butler can be read in "Original Reports and Stenographically Reported Discussions Thereof Had at the Thirty-Fifth Biennial Session of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference, April 9, 1903," Record Group 0, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland, 43-90a.

91. Ibid., 70-76.

92. See A. T. Jones to A. G. Daniells, 26 January 1906, Record Group 11, 1910 [*sic*] A. T. Jones Folder, General Conference archives, Silver Spring, Maryland; A. T. Jones, *A Final Word and a Confession* (n.p., [1906]),31-35). idem, *An Appeal Presented before the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists at Takoma Park, Washington, DC, May 27, 1909* (n.p., 1909).

93. "Talk of Mrs. E. G. White, before Representative Brethren, In the College Library, April 1, 1901, 2:30 P.M.," Manuscript 43a, 1901, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

94. *General Conference Bulletin*, 1901, 228-29.

95. *General Conference Bulletin*, 1903, 17-21.

96. See "Original Reports and Stenographically Reported Discussions Thereof Had at the Thirty-Fourth Biennial Session of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference, 9 April 1903, Record Group 0, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20-20a.

97. Ellen G. White, "Principles for the Guidance of Men in Positions of Responsibility," Manuscript 140, 1902, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

98. Ellen G. White to Judge Jesse Arthur, January 14, 1903, Letter 17, 1903, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

99. *General Conference Bulletin*, 1901, 206.

100. A. G. Daniells to E. A. Sutherland, December 20, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 25, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland; A. G. Daniells to W. C. White, June 18, 1901, Incoming Files, Ellen G. White Estate Office; A. G. Daniells to N. P. Nelson, July 17, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 24, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

101. A. G. Daniells to E. R. Palmer, May 3, 1901, Record Group 9, A. G. Daniells Folder 6, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

102. In the reply to Jones in 1906, it was pointed out that the decision to adopt the new constitution at the 1903 General Conference session was made by majority vote. In fact, all the decisions made at the General Conference session in 1903 were adopted by majority vote. By that time majority vote was the method being consistently followed, despite Daniells stated desire to the contrary less than one year earlier. See *A Statement Refuting Charges Made by A. T. Jones Against the Spirit of Prophecy and the Plan of Organization of the Seventh-day Adventist*

Denomination" (Washington DC: General Conference Committee, 1906), 28. The statement can be found at

http://ellenwhite.org/content/file/statement-refuting-charges-made-t-jones-against-spirit-prophecy-and-plan-organization#document.

103. A. G. Daniells to J. J. Wessells, July 15, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 24, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

104. A. G. Daniells to Members of the General Conference Committee, August 2, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 24, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

105. A. G. Daniells to Edith R. Graham, May 24, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 23, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

106. A. G. Daniells to E. H. Gates, May 23, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 23, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland; A. G. Daniells to M. H. Brown, June 17, 1901, Record Group 11, Letter Book 23, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

107. *General Conference Bulletin*, 1903, 100.

108. *General Conference Bulletin*, 1893, 22-24; Ellen G. White, "Overbearing Control Reproved," Manuscript 43, 1895, Ellen G. White Estate Office.

109. In early 1902 Daniells said: "I believe that we have thrown away a great amount of money and energy in trying to keep useless machinery running. I find that the less complex we make our work, and the more we center our efforts on the simple straight lines of missionary evangelization, the heartier is the response of the people, and the greater is the manifestation of life in the enterprise" (A. G. Daniells to C. H. Jones, April 21, 1902, Incoming Files, Ellen G. White Estate Office).

110. *European Conference Bulletin*, 2.

111. *General Conference Bulletin*, 1903, 18.

112. At the 1903 General Conference session Daniells quoted Ellen White with reference to the simplification of machinery. He noted that she had declared that in "some parts of the work it is true, the machinery has been made too complicated" ("Original Reports and Stenographically Reported Discussions Thereof Had at the Thirty-Fourth Biennial Session of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference, 9 April 1903," Record Group 0, General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland, 75b). Even in 1909, Ellen White found it necessary to stress that "simple organization and church order" were set forth in the New Testament and that the Lord had ordained such for "the unity and perfection of the church" (Ellen G. White to the Leading Ministers in California, December 6, 1909, Letter 178, 1909, Ellen G. White Estate Office).

113. *European Conference Bulletin*, 2.

114. W. A. Spicer, "The Divine Principle of Organization," *ARH*, March 25, 1909, 5.

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